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GERMAN PRISONERS SENT TO SIBERIA

Interreport-Ost
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In mid-November 1953, the last transport, for the time being, of East German demonstrators in the 17 June uprisings was dispatched from the Karl-shorst railroad station to the USSR. Among the 97 prisoners were 17 women.

Every 3-4 weeks since 17 June 1953, groups of 100-130 Germans, who had been arrested by the Soviets during or after the demonstrations, have been sent from the Karlshorst railroad station to Siberia. These people are prisoners of the Soviets who were sentenced by a Soviet court-martial to 20-25 years of forced labor because of "crimes or offenses against the Red Army." According to both East German and West German sources, the total number of these exiles is between 500 and 550.

At least 1,200 demonstrators in the 17 June uprisings or Germans accused of participating in these demonstrations are still in the NKVD [i.e.,MVD] prisons, the most important of which is located in Karlshorst, awaiting sentence. The women in this group number about 80-100. The fact that a number of youths, 15-18 years of age, are among the prisoners cannot be concealed even in the GDR. In East Berlin alone, the names are known of many youths under 18 years of age who have already been transported to Siberia.

Information concerning proceedings against those demonstrators arrested by the Red Army or the NKVD on 17 June 1953 is withheld even from the East German authorities. Not even the Vopo (People's Police) or the East German prosecuting authority has the right to examine the records or to request a list of the names of those arrested. It has been definitely established that a considerable number of Vopo, including former members of the International Brigade and a former adjutant under Hans Kehle, Commandant of the Thaelmann Battalion [of the International Brigade], are among the NKVD prisoners.

A West German father, whose son had been arrested by the Soviets on the occasion of a chance visit to the GDR on 17 June 1953, made inquiries concerning the possibility of an amnesty for his son, who had already been transported to Siberia. The father was informed that those persons arrested on 17 June because of crimes against the Red Army could under no circumstances count on an amnesty.